THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI VASUNDHRA RAJE): (a) Yes Sir.

(b) Government have taken several measures in the recent past to counter the illegal activities of touts and unauthorised agents in the grant of passport services to the public. These include de-recognition of travel agents as an authorised channel for servicing passport applications, issue of passport application forms free of charge, augmentation in the number of passport offices and collection centres in the country, despatch of passports directly to the addressees by post, etc. The activities of touts outside the RPO, Delhi, have been brought to the attention of the local police from time to time and police action against them has been intensified. Investigations so far have not established any definite linkage between the touts and employees of the Passport Office at Delhi. However, vigilance is being strengthened at the Passport Office at Delhi and other places. Government is also making efforts to increase public awareness of the various facilities available at the Passport Offices so as to minimise the influence and activities of unauthorised agents. Passports are issued only after proper verification and examination of the requisite documents.

Discussion on Security Issues with USA

193. DR. VENKATESHWAR RAO: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have discussed their security issues with USA recently;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, whether Government propose to undertake such strategic dialogue in view of threats from the neighbours?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI VASUNDHRA RAJE): (a) to (c) Over the last several months, the United States and India have been engaged in a wide ranging dialogue covering bilateral, regional and global issues including security-related issues. During these meetings, we explained our security concerns and the rationale of our defence-related policies. The purpose of this dialogue has been to enable better understanding and appreciation of each other's points of view and to identify areas of cooperation.

Expenditure incurred on Foreign Tours of Union Ministers

194. SHRI JANARDAN YADAV: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) The details of Union Ministers who undertook foreign tours during the current year;

(b) The total expenditure incurred from public exchequer on their tours; and

(c) The purpose of each Minister's foreign trip?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI VASUNDHRA RAJE): (a) to (c) Information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Exposing of Pakistan's pursuit for Nuclear Weapons

195. DR. MOHAN BABU: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have conveyed their concern over US firms role in Pakistan nuclear programme;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the other steps taken to expose Pakistan's clandestine pursuit of nuclear weapons?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI VASUNDHRA RAJE): (a) and (b) Reports in the media alleging the involvement of US firms in Pakistan's nuclear programme have been brought to the attention of our interlocutors in the US. High level discussions with US officials have been held on a range of subjects of mutual interest, including on

matters of proliferation of nuclear weapon related technologies, particularly in our neighbourhood.

(c) Pakistan's clandestine efforts aimed at procuring nuclear technologies for weapons purposes have been highlighted in our bilateral discussions with various countries and our security concerns arising from such covert activities have been conveyed.

अनिवासी भारतीय बनने के मानदंड

196. **श्री दिलीप सिंह जूदेव:** क्या प्रधान मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) त्रिपुरा में ऐसे भारतीय नागरिकों की संख्या कितनी है, जो गत दो वर्षों के दौरान अनिवासी भारतीय बने हैं;

(ख) अनिवासी भारतीय बनने के लिए क्या-क्या मानदंड निर्धारित किये गये हैं;

(ग) भारतीय फिल्म उद्योग में ऐसे लोगों का ब्यौरा क्या है, जो अनिवासी भारतीय बन गये हैं;

(घ) क्या अनिवासी भारतीयों को देश में कुछ रियायतें/सुविधाएं दी जाती हैं; और

(ङ) यदि हां, तो तत्संबंधी ब्यौरा क्या है?

विदेश मंत्रालय में राज्य मंत्री (श्रीमती वसुन्धरा राजे): (क) से (ग) वे भारतीय नागरिक जो रोजगार के लिए या व्यापार करने या व्यवसाय करने या किसी अन्य प्रयोजन से, भारत से बाहर अनिश्चितकाल तक ठहरने की परिस्थितियों का उल्लेख करते हैं, वे अनिवासी भारतीय का दर्जा प्राप्त करने की योग्यता रखते हैं। सरकार के पास अनिवासी भारतीयों का राज्य-वार या व्यवसाय-वार कोई ब्यौरा नहीं है क्योंकि अनिवासी भारतीय का दर्जा प्राप्त करने के लिए किसी भी भारतीय नागरिक को कोई औपचारिक आवेदन प्रस्तुत करने की आवश्यकता नहीं पड़ती।

(घ) जी, हां।

(ङ) भारत में अनिवासी भारतीयों के निवेश को सुसाध्य बनाने और प्रोत्साहित करने के लिए अनिवासी भारतीयों का एक आयुक्त वित्त-मंत्रालय के अधीन कार्य कर रहा है। विशेष सुविधाओं में, अन्य बातों के साथ-साथ भारत में विरासत में प्राप्त सम्पत्ति को रखने और अर्जित करने का अधिकार, विभिन्न योजनाओं के अन्तर्गत अ-प्रत्यावर्तन और प्रत्यावर्तन के आधार पर निवेश, भारत में अनिवासी बैंक खाते को रखने, प्राथमिकता वाले उद्योगों में निवेश करने, निर्यातोन्मुखी परियोजनाएं और अनिवासी बंधपत्र, कर-प्रोत्साहन, तथा अनिवासी भारतीयों की वापिसी पर दी जा रही विशेष आयात सुविधाएं शामिल हैं।

Fresh initiatives to re-vitalise G-77 in the UN

197. SHRI ASHOK MITRA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to take any fresh initiatives to re-vitalise the Group of 77 in the United Nations;

(b) whether consultations have taken place in this connection with representatives of other major developing countries; and

(c) whether approaches have been made to the Government of the People's Republic of China soliciting more active interest on its part in the affairs of Third World countries?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI VASUNDHRA RAJE): (a) and (b) The Group of 77, of which India is an active member, have and continued to endeavour to adopt common positions on matters of interest to the Group in the United Nations.

(c) China, though not part of the Group of 77, often associates itself with the Group's position. No approaches have been made by the Government of India to the Government of the people's Republic of China soliciting more active interest on its part in the affairs of Third World countries.

Improving people-to-people contact between India and Pakistan

198. SHRI AHMED PATEL: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the steps Government have taken to improve people-to-people contact between India and Pakistan; and

(b) What is the response of Pakistan with regard thereto?